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JOURNAL SENTINEL WATCHDOG REPORT

Walker, GOP push business-friendly policies, even when companies aren’t seeking them

Trade-off



Water flows in the Kilbourn Road Ditch just south of Braun Road and east of I-94 in Mount Pleasant. The ditch, or stream, runs north-south in the general vicinity of where the Foxconn Technology Group will likely construct a large industrial plant. Foxconn will be exempted from state environmental requirements other companies would have to follow. MIKE DE SISTI / MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL

State no longer leads in conservation

Lee Bergquist
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

FIRST OF TWO PARTS

When Foxconn Technology Group begins construction of an industrial plant large enough to cover the entire Village of Shorewood, it will be exempted from state environmental requirements that any other company would have to follow.

Foxconn can fill in wetlands that are regulated by the state, change the course of streams, even build in a stream running through the property if it wants to.

In addition, the plant will use potentially polluting chemicals to manufacture an array of super-high-definition display panels. Yet no environmental impact statement will be required by state officials for one of the largest economic development projects in U.S. history.

“That was not a request that came from Foxconn,” said Tim Sheehy, president of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, who was involved in negotiations with the company.

“That was not a request that came from Foxconn.”

Tim Sheehy
president of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce speaking about Foxconn’s exemption from state environmental requirements

It came from state officials, who believed the environmental reviews could slow the giant complex in Racine County — the plant will be three times larger than the Pentagon — and persuade the Taiwan-based company to build its liquid crystal display panel plant someplace else.

The help for Foxconn underscores how Gov. Scott Walker and fellow Republicans, since voters gave them control in 2010, have engineered the biggest shift in natural resource management in decades by easing regulations and promoting business-friendly policies.

The changes have wide-ranging implications for the

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Health care subsidies may make you want a pay cut

Assistance ends abruptly at certain income levels

Guy Boulton
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

In a health care system teeming with fine print, here’s an oddity that middle-class people who buy insurance on their own, rather than through an employer, need to know: You might want to take a pay cut next year.

Consider the situation of a 63-year-old married couple with a projected household income of \$70,000 next year. The lowest-cost health plan they can buy in Milwaukee County will cost them \$24,034.80.

If that couple’s income falls to \$60,000, however, the same health plan

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Bucks slow pursuit of partner

Team seeks business to provide arena its name

James B. Nelson
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

For months, Milwaukee Bucks President Peter Feigin had a simple answer when asked about the naming rights deal for the new arena: Soon.

Soon is coming much later than expected for a deal that the Bucks believe is worth up to \$200 million, will last 20 years and serve as the financial linchpin to the \$524 million downtown arena project.

And it’s clear that securing a naming rights partner is far more complicated than simply putting a local company’s name in lights on the side of the building. It’s evolved into an international effort that’s banking on the NBA’s explod-

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